

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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APPROVED BY ARA:WGBOWDLER

ARA/APU:PFAUCETT

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S/PRS:PAUL HARE (INFO)

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TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, AR

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE - OLGA TALAMANTE CASE

FOLLOWING IS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR USE BY DEPARTMENT PRESS
OFFICERS CONCERNING CASE OF OLGA TALAMANTE:

Q. HAS THE EMBASSY OBTAINED ACCESS TO MISS TALAMANTE?

A. YES. AN EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH MISS TALAMANTE IN
THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE IN THE PROVINCIAL TOWN
OF AZUL ON DECEMBER 4.

Q. HOW IS SHE?

A. ACCORDING TO THE EMBASSY'S REPORT, SHE IS WELL.

Q. IS THERE ANY INDICATION THAT SHE WAS POORLY TREATED AT
ANY TIME?

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A. MISS TALAMANTE ALLEGED THAT SHE WAS MISTREATED AT THE OUTSET OF HER IMPRISONMENT AND HAD COMPLAINED TO THE JUDGE. THE JUDGE CONFIRMED TO THE EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE

COMPLAINT HAD BEEN MADE, THAT IT HAD BEEN INVESTIGATED. THE JUDGE NOTED THAT THE INVESTIGATION DID NOT TURN UP CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT EITHER THE COMPLAINT OF MISS TALAMANTE OR THE DENIAL OF THE DETAINING AUTHORITIES.

Q. WHAT DOES MISTREATMENT MEAN IN THIS CASE?

A. MISS TALAMANTE SAID SHE HAD BEEN SUBJECT TO ELECTRIC SHOCKS AND BEATINGS.

Q. WHAT KIND OF ASSURANCES HAVE WE OBTAINED FROM THE ARGENTINES AT THIS POINT?

A. WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED OF CONTINUED ACCESS TO HER. IN ADDITION, THE JUDGE WITH JURISDICTION OVER THE CASE ASSURED US THAT SHE WOULD BE WELL TREATED.

Q. IF SHE WAS INITIALLY ARRESTED ON NOVEMBER 10 AS REPORTED, WHY DID IT TAKE SO LONG TO ARRANGE ACCESS?

A. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE EMBASSY WERE NOT AWARE OF MISS TALAMANTE'S ARREST UNTIL NOVEMBER 25. SHE TOLD THE EMBASSY OFFICER THAT SHE HAD NOT SOUGHT OR REQUESTED U.S. CONSULAR ASSISTANCE.

Q. WHAT ABOUT CHARGES? HAS SHE BEEN FORMALLY CHARGED WITH ANY SPECIFIC OFFENSE?

A. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SHE HAS NOT BEEN FORMALLY CHARGED AS YET. THIS CASE IS BEING HANDLED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE ARGENTINE "STATE OF SIEGE." UNDER THE STATE OF SIEGE INDIVIDUALS MAY BE DETAINED AND HELD EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF FORMAL CHARGES AGAINST THEM. WE UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER,, THAT 12 YOUNG PEOPLE IN ADDITION TO MISS TALAMANTE WERE ARRESTED IN A HOUSE IN WHICH ARMS AND OTHER "SUBVERSIVE" MATERIAL WERE REPORTEDLY FOUND.
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Q. DOES SHE HAVE A LOCAL ATTORNEY?

A. A LOCAL ATTORNEY FOR THE GROUP HAD BEEN DESIGNATED BUT HE HAS APPARENTLY WITHDRAWN FROM THE CASE. ARRANGEMENTS ARE NOW BEING MADE BY THE COURT FOR ANOTHER ATTORNEY. SHOULD SHE REQUEST, THE EMBASSY WILL HELP HER ARRANGE FOR PRIVATE LEGAL COUNSEL.

Q. DO WE KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER SHE WILL BE INCARCERATED?

A. WE DO NOT.

Q. WHAT IF ANYTHING DO THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE EMBASSY PLAN TO DO AT THIS POINT?

A. THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN CLOSE CONTACT WITH MISS TALAMANTE AS WELL AS ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES CONCERNING HER WELFARE AND THE CHARGES AGAINST HER.

Q. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT HER COMPLAINT THAT SHE HAS BEEN MISTREATED?

A. AS I HAVE ALREADY SAID, THE EMBASSY HAS DISCUSSED IT WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. BOTH MISS TALAMANTE AND THE JUDGE TOLD THE EMBASSY OFFICER THAT SHE IS BEING WELL TREATED AT THE PRESENT TIME AND THE JUDGE GAVE ASSURANCES THAT SHE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE SO TREATED. KISSINGER

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